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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/856,495	09/24/2001	Jorg Adler	P21094	2775
7055	7590	06/14/2005	EXAMINER	
GREENBLUM & BERNSTEIN, P.L.C. 1950 ROLAND CLARKE PLACE RESTON, VA 20191			MENON, KRISHNAN S	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			1723	

DATE MAILED: 06/14/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/856,495

Applicant(s)

ADLER ET AL.

Examiner

Krishnan S. Menon

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 04 May 2005.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 19-45 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 29-41, 44 and 45 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 19-23, 25- 28, 42 and 43 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 24 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claims 19-45 are pending, of which claims 29-41, 44 and 45 are withdrawn from consideration as being directed to a non-elected invention.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

1. Claims 19 –23, 25- 27, 42 and 43 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by, or in the alternative, under 35 USC 103(a) as unpatentable over Abe et al. (US 4,971,696).

Claim 19 recites a ceramic multi-layer filter comprising at least two layers of same or different materials and of different particle sizes in the two layers, one layer being a support layer and the other layer having smaller particle size, the ceramic particles in the membrane being surface or spot-bonded by a surface-wetting material. The rest of the claim recites process of forming the filter.

Abe teaches a ceramic filter having multiple layers (col 3 lines 45-55), layers having different particle sizes (col 4 lines 31-65), with the pore size successively reducing with the layers (col 4 lines 45-55). The filter is formed by sintering ceramic particles and borosilicate glass (col 4 lines 42-55). In addition, example 1 (col 10 lines

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45-65) teaches multi-layer support with alumina and inorganic binder. Col 5 lines 30-35 teaches that when in multilayer, it is desirable to have each layer of the support of the same composition and the same thermal expansion. The reference does not explicitly state that it is a wetting agent and it forms the spot or surface contacts, but this would be inherent. The express, implicit, and inherent disclosures of a prior art reference may be relied upon in the rejection of claims under 35 U.S.C. 102 or 103. "The inherent teaching of a prior art reference, a question of fact, arises both in the context of anticipation and obviousness." In re Napier, 55 F.3d 610, 613, 34 USPQ2d 1782, 1784 (Fed. Cir. 1995) (affirmed a 35 U.S.C. 103 rejection based in part on inherent disclosure in one of the references). See also In re Grasselli, 713 F.2d 731, 739, 218 USPQ 769, 775 (Fed. Cir. 1983). The filter layers also is described as desired to have the same coefficient of thermal expansion (col 5 lines 30-35). Particle sizes, etc are taught in col 5 lines 14-68.

Regarding the process limitations in claim 19, 42 and 43, "[E]ven though product-by-process claims are limited by and defined by the process, determination of patentability is based on the product itself. The patentability of a product does not depend on its method of production. If the product in the product-by-process claim is the same as or obvious from a product of the prior art, the claim is unpatentable even though the prior product was made by a different process." In re Thorpe, 777 F.2d 695, 698, 227 USPQ 964, 966 (Fed. Cir. 1985).

Claim 20: multi layer in which the particle size decrease in direction going away from the support – see col 4 lines 45-55 and example 1, col 10 lines 45-65.

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Claims 21, 22, 23: the ceramic material could be the same in all layers, silicon carbide or alumina, and same surface wetting material – see col 4 lines 44-50 and examples.

Claims 25 and 26: pore volume and pore size reduced only slightly by the material, and not more than 10%: a process limitation; In re Thorpe. Claims do not recite actual pore volume or pore size.

Claim 27: particle size ratio between 1:5 and 1:10: particle sizes are described in col 3 lines 27-44, col 6 lines 40-63, col 9 lines 60-67, which meet this ratio.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claim 28 is rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as unpatentable over Abe et al, (US 4,971,696).

Claim 28: Abe does not teach the average particle sizes of the support layers, but teaches the support layers in terms of the average pore sizes (see col 5). However, it would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention that the support layer average particle size could be determined to suit the pore size of the support layer, as taught by Abe. See col 5 lines 14-67.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claim 24 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments, filed 5/4/05, with respect to the Ravagni ref have been fully considered and are persuasive. The rejection of claims 19-28,42 and 43 on the Ravagni reference (WO '207) has been withdrawn.

In response to the arguments against the Abe ref, applicant's specific questions about the Abe teaching is already answered in the rejection. Re pore size vs particle size, they are complementary; claim 19 does not recite any particle sizes, and a change in pore size corresponds to a change in particle size. See col 5 lines 15-67. Arguments re the borosilicate glass in Abe is persuasive, and that rejection (claim 24) is also withdrawn.

Conclusion

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the

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shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Krishnan S. Menon whose telephone number is 571-272-1143. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:00-4:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Wanda L. Walker can be reached on 571-272-1151. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Krishnan S. Menon
Patent Examiner
5/25/05


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